



# Songbook for the CD



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For the many years I have been a sideman and/or producer for some of Texas’ finest singer-songwriters, I have become well acquainted with the quietly spiritual direction in the creative process. In 2011 our historic library in Lockhart began the monthly series *Evenings with the Songwriter*, to *explore the art and craft of songwriting*. With over sixty songwriters as featured guests, we find that each song has its own story, its own place in the path of the songwriter. (While Freud may have said, “Sometimes a cigar is just a cigar,” my experience is that rarely is a song just a song.)

As I began the performance aspect of my musical ministry, I especially enjoyed the ‘here and now’ quality of sharing of my works and my path. Recounting the story of each song as part of the presentation allowed me to put in perspective the spiritual source of ‘inspiration’, as well as the personal source of ‘perspiration’ in the creative process. However, any ego-derived sense of authorship disappears when I acknowledge that it is my God-given gifts of wordsmithing and tunesmithing that make possible the ‘perspiration’, and thus the entire process becomes spiritual. (I imagine many farmers and gardeners have reached the same conclusion.)

Yet for all its here-and-now-ness, the spoken/sung word can linger in the form of writings and recordings. So I went back to my conventional music business roots to record twelve songs from my Personal Hymnal, and presented here in written form: leadsheets with lyrics, melody, and chords; lyrics as verse; and voiced hymnal versions. A brief note about the story of each is also included.

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# Open Up the Doors

Fletcher Clark

Lively (♩ = 100)

O - pen up the doors; O - pen up the doors; O - pen up to  
leave be - hind my sin. O - pen up the doors. O - pen up the doors.  
O - pen up and let this sin - ner in. 1. Such a sim - ple  
2. Such a sim - ple  
3. Such a sim - ple  
door - way to re - demp - tion o - pened up and let this sin - ner in.  
path - way to sal - va - tion marked for me to tra - vel in The Way.  
high - way up to hea - ven where the streets and lanes are paved in gold.  
There where God would ne - ver hold ex - emp - tion,  
Mo - ments of Thy ho - ly re - ve - la - tion,  
There my soul will bide with Thee for - ev - er,  
there where I could leave be - hind my sin.  
time to teach my heart and mouth to say:  
nev - er shall I leave a - gain the fold.

## **OPEN UP THE DOORS**

Fletcher Clark, March 17, 2013

### *refrain*

OPEN UP THE DOORS, OPEN THE UP DOORS.

Open up to leave behind my sin.

OPEN UP THE DOORS, OPEN UP THE DOORS.

Open up and let this sinner in.

Such a simple doorway to redemption

Opened up to let this sinner in.

There where God would never hold exemption,

There where I could leave behind my sin.

### *refrain*

Such a simple pathway to salvation,

Marked for me to travel in The Way.

Moments of Thy holy revelation,

Time to teach my heart and mouth to say:

### *refrain*

Such a simple highway up to heaven

Where the streets and lanes are paved in gold.

There my soul will bide with Thee forever,

Never shall I leave again the fold.

### *refrain*



*Open Up the Doors* (2013) These simple front doors to Emmanuel Episcopal were donated by our musician Julie Michie in memory of her aunt, Marguerite McDonald. We have used this photograph on note cards for our church family and visitors, with the caption 'Doors of Faith'. Those doors opened for me in 2008, and I innocently entered, completely unprepared for the experiences that would lay therein. These doors have become my symbol for that which is both a threshold of promise and a barrier to an intrusive world. I have found myself constrained to open such doors and embrace the grace they promise and the shelter they provide, becoming the basis of my musical ministry and the CD title cut.



*Every Sinner Has a Future* (2010) While riding my motorcycle through the Central Texas countryside, this message was on a marquee in front of a small rural church: "Every Saint has a Past, Every Sinner has a Future." I thought about the road I was on - where I had been and where I was going. I began reflecting on my path from both perspectives - before the acceptance of God's presence and after the willingness to place His will before mine. After writing the song down, I found out sometime later the basis for the message on the marquee. English playwright Oscar Wilde had once famously written, "Every saint has a past and every sinner has a future." My Muse had me transpose the phrases, preferring the rhythm of this scansion.

*Lord, We Would Have Heard You* (2011) I watched storms and floods in the East so recently following devastating sand storms in the West. Tornadoes in the South and blizzards in the North. Then the news of raging fires in nearby Bastrop, Texas confirmed my fears that a dear friend, a concert violinist, must surely have lost his precious musical instruments, and every other material possession. In resignation more than despair, I mourned, "Lord, we would have heard You - You didn't have to speak so loud." The rest of the lyric came straight from the evening news. Writing is very cathartic, and by the time I got to the concluding refrain, I was at peace. What began as resignation became acceptance - and serenity.



*Next Best Thing* (2014) For every choice, the opportunity cost is the foregone alternative. So I was instructed academically in formal economics. How to choose? People considerably wiser than I commended to me that I meditate on that and then do the next *right* thing. The right thing is always the best choice, so I turned that into the next best thing. Take that step, and then the next on the path similarly, and before you know it, you are on the proverbial straight and narrow. Of course a little feedback from the universe mixed with the awareness and humility to acknowledge it help a lot.

*Leave My Faith Alone* (2013) The story of Job is widely regarded as tragic, and certainly so it would seem when considered from the losses he suffered. Yet, God had singled out Job among all his creations to test the ability of the pious to resist the enticements of evil. Robbed of his worldly goods and comforts, Job clung unquestioningly to his faith in the goodness of God's will. And why not? He understood that the material world has very little to do with the Kingdom of God. And to me that viewpoint should not be spoken with the voice of a defeatist, but rather the defiant voice of an unshakable believer.



*Tiny Voice* (2014) I first wrote a simple three verse song with a somewhat conservative phrase structure, melodic contour, and harmonic vocabulary. Seeking a richer treatment. I wrote a bridge, expanded the range to a full octave plus a fifth, with some delightfully deceptive cadences and richer harmonies. I sent this to organist (and mentor) Julie Michie, assuring her that indeed I wanted some honest feedback. She honestly said to lose the bridge, simplify the phrase structure, narrow the range, and forego the odd leaps in favor of simpler stepwise, diatonic motion. With that guidance, I ended up with the exact draft with which I had begun, suitable for the congregation. I prefer this more sophisticated version for performance and recording.

# Open Up the Doors

Lively (♩ = 100)

Fletcher Clark

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up to leave be - hind my sin. O - pen up the doors.

O - pen up the doors. Op - en up and let this sin - ner in. Fine

1. Such a sim - ple door - way to re - demp - tion o - pened up and  
 2. Such a sim - ple path - way to sal - va - tion marked for me to  
 3. Such a sim - ple high - way up to hea - ven where the streets and